

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 00227 051223Z
ACTION EA-12

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8443

UNCLAS HONG KONG 0227

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR
SUBJECT: PEKING'S JOINT NEW YEAR'S DAY EDITORIAL

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM SENT TO USDA/FAS WASHDC P 040122Z JAN 78
HERE REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

UNCLAS HONG KONG 0066

TOFAS 1

FROM AG OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR
SUBJECT: PEKING'S JOINT NEW YEAR'S DAY EDITORIAL

REF: HONG KONG 15859

1. PEKING'S JOINT NEW YEAR'S DAY EDITORIAL GLOSSED OVER THE
GENERALLY DISAPPOINTING PERFORMANCE OF THE ECONOMY IN 1977, DWELLING
INSTEAD ON THE NEED FOR ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT BEGINNING IN 1978.
THE 1977 GRAIN HARVEST WAS SAID TO BE "FAIRLY GOOD" AND THAT
COTTON OUTPUT ROSE IN SPITE OF SERIOUS NATURAL CALAMITIES.
AS FOR THE FUTURE, THE EDITORIAL REITERATED THAT A FASTER GROWTH
IN AGRICULTURE IS A PREREQUISITE TO A FASTER GROWTH OF INDUSTRY
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AND THE NATIONAL ECONOMY AS A WHOLE AND THAT "ALL TRADES AND
PROFESSIONS MUST PAY ATTENTION TO AGRICULTURE, SUPPORT IT, AND
GIVE THE GREEN LIGHT TO ITS DEVELOPMENT."

2. COMMENT. THE WORDING OF THE NEW YEAR EDITORIAL IS SIMILAR
TO PEKING'S DECEMBER 27, 1977, ECONOMIC CLAIMS WITH TWO NOTEABLE
EXCEPTIONS. THE DECEMBER 27 ARTICLE CLAIMED 1977 GRAIN OUTPUT

REACHED LAST YEAR'S LEVEL AND THAT THE OUTPUT OF COTTON, HEMP,
JUTE, CURED TOBACCO, AND TEA WENT UP. THE OMISSION OF THE
STATEMENTS THAT GRAIN PRODUCTION REACHED LAST YEAR'S LEVEL
AND THAT THE OUTPUT OF HEMP, JUTE, CURED TOBACCO AND TEA WAS UP
IN THE NEW YEAR EDITORIAL SUGGESTS THAT OUTPUT WAS DOWN, RATHER
THAN UP IN 1977. WE TENTATIVELY ESTIMATE GRAIN PRODUCTION WAS
OFF BY ABOUT 2.5 PERCENT IN 1977 ALTHOUGH THE DECLINE MAY HAVE BEEN
GREATER. THE OUTTURN OF OILSEEDS WAS EVEN LOWER THAN THE POOR
1976 CROP. COTTON PRODUCTION MAY HAVE BEEN UP, BUT IN ALL
LIKELIHOOD THE INCREASE WAS TOO SLIGHT TO HAVE MUCH IMPACT ON
EITHER THE TIGHT DOMESTIC COTTON SITUATION OR CHINA'S
NEED TO IMPORT . ERISMAN UNQUOTE
SHOESMITH

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